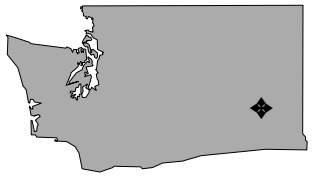
Moses Lake Wellfield Contamination Site — Formerly Larson Air Force Base — NPL

Size: 9,607 acres
Mission: Served as tactical air command, air transport, and strategic air command base; provided pilot training
HRS Score: 50.00; placed on NPL in October 1992
IAG Status: IAG under negotiation with EPA
Contaminants: VOCs, jet fuel, possibly tetraethyl lead and low-level radioactive materials
Media Affected: Groundwater and soil
Funding to Date: $3.0 million
Estimated Cost to Completion (Completion Year): $1.6 million (FY1999)
Final Remedy in Place or Response Complete Date for All Sites: FY1998



Moses Lake, Washington

Restoration Background

Larson Air Force Base served as a tactical air command base, then as a military air transport facility and a Strategic Air Command base. The installation was sold to the Port of Moses Lake in 1966 and is now operated by Grant County Airport, which is a regional aviation, industrial, and educational facility. The Moses Lake Wellfield is a city-owned water supply for residents of the former Larson Air Force Base housing area. The Wellfield property is located on the former base. This drinking water supply system is separate from other city drinking water systems. The city has performed Remedial Actions (RAs) at the Wellfield, and concentrations of trichloroethene (TCE) have been reduced below the levels established in the Federal Drinking Water Standards. A privately owned water supply system for the Skyline community remains contaminated with TCE. The Skyline property adjoins the former base. Other private wells may be contaminated at levels above the Federal Drinking Water Standards.

Beginning in FY87, environmental assessments identified four sites that required further investigation: 11 underground storage tanks (USTs) and associated potentially contaminated soil; a TCE-contaminated groundwater plume; an area potentially containing low-level radioactive waste; and two disposal areas potentially containing tetraethyl lead.

In FY88, TCE was detected in the Moses Lake Wellfield. A Phase I Remedial Investigation (RI) was initiated in FY91 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Seattle District, to identify potential source areas that would require further characterization. In FY93, the Phase I RI was completed. In FY94, three additional rounds of groundwater sampling were conducted under an addendum to the Phase I RI. The Port of Moses Lake conducted an Interim Response Action, providing bottled water to the Skyline community. In FY92, 11 USTs were excavated and removed from the site.

In FY94, USACE, Seattle District, under contract to EPA, completed an Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis (EE/CA) to evaluate the Skyline drinking water system. The EE/CA was distributed for public comment, and a public meeting was conducted.

In FY95, USACE, Omaha District, completed a search for potentially responsible parties (PRPs) and a cost allocation effort. USACE, Seattle District, also completed the addendum to the Phase I RI, including additional groundwater sampling.

In FY97, the Omaha District Office of Counsel, in coordination with its Department of Justice attorney, negotiated with EPA Region 10 to decide who (EPA, USACE, or PRPs) will take the lead in the coming RI/FS.

FY98 Restoration Progress

USACE, Omaha District, in coordination with its Department of Justice attorney, began negotiating with EPA on an Interagency Agreement (IAG) for the RI/FS. In June 1998, the project was turned over to the USACE, Seattle District, for execution of the technical RI/FS. Negotiations for the IAG continued with EPA.

Plan of Action

- Negotiations will continue until an IAG is finalized between EPA and USACE, Seattle District
- In FY99, an RI/FS will be initiated to determine the extent of the TCE plume and the private residences whose water supplies are contaminated with TCE as well as other contaminates, the presumptive remedy for the tetraethyl lead disposal sites, and the remedy for the low-level radioactive wastes

FY99 Funding by Phase and Relative Risk